

Collective Worship Policy

St. George's C of E Primary School

'let your light shine!'




Aspire Federation

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Signed: ... 

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Date: ...11.9.24.....

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(Chair of Governors)

Date: ...11.9.24.....

Collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, the life source, giving a foundation to all that is done within the life of our school. It is a time for us to **let our light shine**. Collective worship is time for the whole school to gather and for everyone to be given the opportunity to grow spiritually and have a 'time to breathe'. It is a central element of school life which is an enjoyable and uplifting time for adults and young people alike. At its heart, we believe that collective worship offers pupils and adults the opportunity to experience the presence, power and peace of God through prayer, reflection, singing and sharing. It is important that there is an opportunity to appreciate and respond to a variety of styles found in the diversity of the Christian church while enabling all taking part to develop an understanding of Anglican liturgy and the Trinity.

At St. George's Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspirational. It is an opportunity:

- to worship God,
- to consider spiritual and moral issues,
- for spiritual development
- to explore own beliefs
- to inspire social action
- promote common ethos and shared values.

Collective worship is an expression of a school's distinctive Christian vision.

Religious worship is the acknowledgement of 'worth' which is attributable to a supreme being, often referred to as God or the divine. Therefore, at St. George's, opportunities provided for children and adults to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ, if they so wish. We can never make anyone worship because it is an attitude of the heart focused on God; we seek to lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish.

What is Worship?

At St. Georges Collective Worship is an act of worship that is inclusive of everybody, inspirational in nature, with an open invitation to participate. We make no assumptions about shared belief during collective worship. We follow the 1944 Education Act 'to provide a daily act of collective worship'.

Collective Worship and the Law

At St. George's we take note of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) See Appendix 1.

We follow the legal requirement that all maintained schools and academies in England hold a daily act of Collective worship which is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. Collective worship is separate from Religious Education. Collective worship is not designated curriculum time. The act of Collective worship at St. George's is distinctive and identifiable therefore meeting the legal requirements. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship which was established in the 1944 Act and remains unchanged. If a parent/carer asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at a school, then we comply to their wishes.

Collective Worship and Vision

Our school's distinctive Christian vision '**Let your light shine**' is rooted in the context of our school community. It articulates its vision for the school community in a way that is rooted in a Christian worldview. At St. George's we aim to follow the Church of England's Vision for Education (2016). This contains four key themes:

- Community
- Dignity
- Wisdom
- Hope

These four key themes are embedded into collective worship at St. George's and are our four of our termly values. Our aim is that collective worship is a time in which each person knows that they are valued and treated with dignity, whatever their religious or non-religious convictions. It is a time for actively seeking new knowledge and learning as well as showing wisdom by acting on this knowledge in ways to make the world a better place. It is a moment outside of the busyness of our school day in which everyone comes together with a feeling of one and celebrates letting our light shine as we work towards achieving this goal.

Aims of Collective worship

Our Collective worship has three underlying principles:

1. It is inclusive and contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils
2. It is invitational and respects the dignity of all participants
3. It is inspiring and combines a range of experiences

Invitational

Our acts of collective worship provide wider opportunities to:

- nurture and maintain the dignity of the image of God in everyone through working for social justice
- encourage pupils to consider the needs of others through charitable service and courageous advocacy;
- nurture reflection, stillness, meditation and prayer;
- provide pupils with (age-appropriate) opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words;
- provide a sense of occasion that is separate from the rest of the school day;
- foster an appreciation of the natural world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it;
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community.

Inclusive

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an inclusive faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. It is important that everyone in attendance can be present with integrity. Through their Christian character our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles, and world views which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every person to attend; focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils;
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community in preparation, participation and leadership.

Inspirational

Our acts of collective worship provide wider opportunities to:

- promote wide ownership of our Christian vision; assist pupils to have increased awareness and to reflect upon fundamental issues about life;
- enhance, complement and extend curricular work;
- develop pupils understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican Church through appropriate Biblical and liturgical content;
- encounter and explore Jesus' teachings and the trinitarian nature of Christian faith in God;
- identify opportunities for Christian celebration which can be associated with other school events;
- include appropriate references to and elements of other religions and non-religious worldviews include opportunities to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils and adults.
- Include a range of people to lead worship, including pupils.
- Timetable creative acts of worship, including the use of the local church and various groupings of pupils.

- Plan, monitor and evaluate worship in relationship to our distinctive Christian vision and our associated values.
- Opportunities for worship/prayer throughout the day.

At St. George's we aim through collective worship to:

- explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, we will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Picture News

Once a week we follow Picture News for our Collective worship. This gives the children real life learning opportunities for something happening right now meaning potentially children can influence and bring about change – both locally and globally! What's going on in the news can directly link to nearly every area of the curriculum and allows children to use fresh and exciting content! The news can bring the world closer to children's everyday lives through making them more aware and understanding about the world they live in. The news covers political issues, social issues, moral issues, environmental issues and different cultures.

Spiritual development:

Through Picture News sessions, children are given the opportunity to be reflective about their own beliefs and show respect for the beliefs, faiths, feelings and values of others. Coverage is broad and includes current news stories about the environment, religion, politics and culture. It also includes social, ethical and moral issues. Opportunities are given for children to learn about themselves, others and the world around them.

Moral development:

News stories explore some issues which allow children to see the difference between right and wrong in the 'real' world'. Opportunities to look at the civil and criminal law of England are given. Children offer their views about moral and ethical issues and can listen and respond respectfully to the viewpoints of others.

Social development:

Each week, we focus on one of the **British values** (Individual Liberty, Rule of Law, Democracy, Mutual respect and Tolerance) that links to the story. This allows children to accept and engage in British Values in a meaningful and relevant way. They also make links to personal, school and community values. Picture News stories inspire children to take action and have allowed opportunities to demonstrate children's willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings.

Cultural development:

Children are given opportunities to explore a range of different cultures. It allows children to understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity locally, nationally and globally. Picture news stories cover British politics giving children knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system.

Protected Characteristics:

Each week the children make links between the nine Protected characteristics (the aspects of a person's identity that are protected under the equality Act 2012) and the news story.

United Rights of a Child:

Links are also made weekly between the news story and the United Nations Rights of the Child Act (1989).

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body:

- provide a statement on the school website, which makes clear that the aims of Collective worship within the school are based on its Christian foundation and includes parents' legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship.
- ensure that the school fulfils its legal responsibility for Collective worship; in conjunction with the Headteacher,
- monitor the impact of Collective worship within the school and make recommendations for its development in accordance with the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule and the Church of England Education Office Collective Worship Guidance

The Headteacher/Collective Worship Coordinator:

- provide support with the planning of Collective worship with reference to the school's distinctive Christian vision and values.
- observe acts of worship led by different people and record its on appropriateness & quality.
- develop a pupil-led monitoring process.
- facilitate pupil feedback.
- regularly monitor and evaluate impact.
- report on Collective worship to the governing body.
- implement Collective worship development points regarding training and resources.
- ensure evaluation feeds into planning.

Pupils Leading Collective Worship:

- plan and lead Collective worship
- suggest new ideas for Collective worship contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of Collective worship in the school.
- promote Collective worship within the school.

Planning

At St. George's the content and delivery of Collective worship is varied (reflecting the Anglican traditions and the liturgical year). In the planning of collective worship, we ensure coverage is Christian in character and that it demonstrates our Christian vision. Collective worship is an expression of our Christian vision to **let your light shine**. Worships are planned termly with a emphasise on our termly value.

Collective worship provides opportunities for participants to gather, engage and respond in a variety of ways. We use the language of Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending (as seen in the helpful planning resource 'Flippin' Praise') as a practical and helpful way to plan collective worship.

Gathering

As our school gathers together, we listen to a piece of music or song, or there may be a piece of artwork to look at. Create a sense of welcome, a sense that this is something different to the other things they do throughout the day. We say a daily prayer and open the box to remind and take out the bible, a cross and candle to remind us of God the father, God the son and God the holy spirit – God the three in one.

Engaging

This is usually the main part in an act of worship. This is an opportunity for pupils to engage with the Bible and theme. Pupils are encouraged to make connections between the biblical narrative and their own lives. It's a time of exploration and where the worship lead shares the message by a range of different strategies for engagement that reflects the diverse ways in which Christians express their beliefs.

Responding

For every pupil and adult present, some response should be supported and encouraged, whether that is through prayer and reflection or making suggestions of practical responses in school or at home. We always invite, never compel or assume, but an opportunity should be given to respond to God, for those that wish to do so.

Sending

We aim for the ending of worship to be full of purpose, as children are sent out to be different and to 'do' differently. Children will listen to music or a song as they are sent out and may be given a challenge or a blessing.

Children leading Collective Worship

At St. George's it is important that children are involved in planning, leading and evaluating Collective worship. Collective worship provides a safe space to develop skills such as public speaking, organisation, leadership, team working and many more. The Collective Worship Council plan and deliver workshops throughout the year including harvest festival, Remembrance Day, Christmas service, Easter and Pentecost. Children **let their light shine** through leading worship and encouraging the school community to do so as well. Children express themselves through stories, prayer, songs and praise. Each class shares their work on the termly value with the whole school community.

Monitoring and evaluating

At St. George's, our collective worship leader meets regularly with our local rector to review themes for the year, look at monitoring and evaluations to continue developing Collective worship and its impact. The collective worship leader reports annually to the full governing body, highlighting any recommendations for improvement and development. Children from all year groups evaluate workshops and are given a chance to share their views through pupil voice. Governors, the Collective Worship lead and Head of School observe and review an act of worship each term.

Global Awareness

Global awareness is timetabled into the worship throughout the year. Children's awareness of our global neighbours through worship reflects our commitment to caring for the people and planet and fostering a culture of treating all people with dignity and respect.

Clergy and Visitors Leading Worship

At St. George's it is important to have our local clergy and other visitors into school to be a part of and to lead Collective worship. We aim to develop strong relationships and community links within our local community. Our local church supports our school in developing our provision for Collective worship. Our Collective worship lead liaises with our local diocese, local clergy and church team as well as our federated school, William Hildyard C of E Primary and Nursery School. All visitors and clergy are given a copy of our Collective worship policy and visitor guide.

Appendix 1

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

1. All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal - see Appendix 1) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship
2. The daily act of Collective Worship should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
3. All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character.
4. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
5. The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools may hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
6. Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.
7. The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured.

Appendix 2

The right of parents/guardians to withdraw

The right of parents/guardians to withdraw their children from Collective Worship was established in the 1944 Act and remains unchanged. Parents retain this right in voluntary aided and voluntary controlled church schools. This means that:

- if a parent/carer asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at a school, the school must comply.
- if parents/carers request alternative worship in accordance with a particular faith or denomination for a child who has been withdrawn, schools should respond positively providing that:

denominational worship does not replace the statutory act of collective worship for voluntary schools and alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purpose of the school curriculum; such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

Parents/guardians are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal. However, a headteacher will find it helpful to establish with any parent wanting to exercise the right of withdrawal:

- the elements of collective worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part.
- the practical implications of withdrawal.
- whether the parent/guardian will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much.

A school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from collective worship. Withdrawal does not guarantee exclusion from the religious character of the school and the governors should make clear to parents/guardians that in choosing a church school they are thereby committing themselves to their child's participation in the overall distinctive Christian vision of the school.

The school's arrangements for collective worship and the rights of parents/guardians to withdraw their children should be clearly outlined in the school prospectus and/or on the school website. Governors should phrase their statement carefully so they indicate their hope that all members of the school community will take part in Collective Worship. However, they must make explicit the parental right of withdrawal.